

# *Hysen's Health Clinic*

## **About Acupuncture.**

Acupuncture consists of the insertion of very fine needles at varying angles and depths at specific points on the body. Acupuncture has been practised continuously in China for over 6000 years and is still used today according to principles that were similar or the same to those used by ancient Chinese physicians.

Acupuncture is not a purely Chinese healing method however, as various forms of it have been practised in the past the world over. For example, the Ancient Egyptians as well as the Mayas in Central America practised similar healing methods; while during the Middle Ages a form of acupuncture was practised by both Arabic and Jewish physicians. But millenia of use of acupuncture in China has ensured that the highest development and greatest level of technical perfection was achieved there.

## **Conditions Commonly Treated By Acupuncture.**

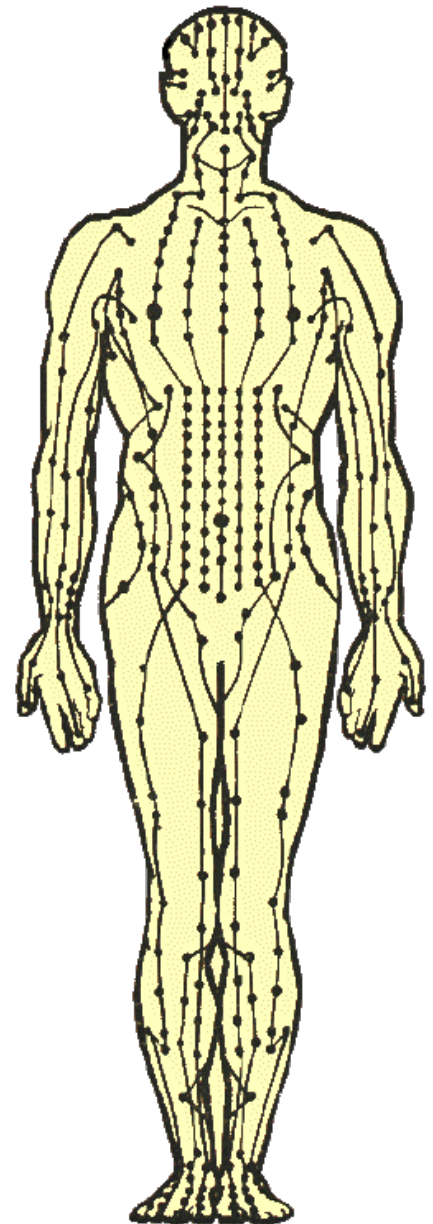
A lot of research has been undertaken in the last 20 years or so as regards the efficacy of acupuncture. Many of these have been done in China, but a large proportion have also been done by Western Universities, in fact the research as to the uses and efficacy of acupuncture are ongoing both in China as well as in the West. So far this research has proven the efficacy of acupuncture in a wide range of conditions, including those associated with the joints and muscles, such as chronic sprains and strains; joint pain and inflammation associated with arthritis or due to wear and tear; rheumatic conditions and nerve pain; allergies; anxiety, stress and insomnia; and menstrual and menopausal problems. Traditionally however, acupuncture is usually not used alone, but in combination with herbal medicine and/or other Chinese Medicine approaches. Acupuncture can also be used in conjunction with conventional medical treatment.

## **Meridians and Acupuncture Points.**

Most Chinese acupuncture points are located along acupuncture Meridians (see image), which are energy channels that were mapped by ancient Chinese physicians. They are already mentioned in books over 2000 years old. Each acupuncture point has its own unique function and not only that, certain acupuncture points become more active at given times of the day and month. Acupuncture points must therefore be carefully selected by a practitioner in order to achieve the greatest treatment efficacy.

## **Non-Meridian Acupuncture Points.**

In addition to the acupuncture points that are located along acupuncture Meridians, there are also a number of extra points with special functions, that located away from the Meridians. Further, when there is a problem in a particular area of the



body, temporary points will spontaneously manifest. A selection from all of these points may be used by a practitioner for an acupuncture treatment.

### **Hand, Foot and Ear Acupuncture.**

Korea has developed a unique system of acupuncture, that almost exclusively uses points on the hands and feet. Also more recently, acupuncturists in France have developed a system that utilises acupuncture points in the ear. These points are not used by all acupuncture practitioners, as they can be far more difficult and therefore time-consuming to locate than the body points. However, both of these systems are particularly efficacious in certain special conditions and are therefore applied in this clinic for this purpose.

### **The Effect from Acupuncture Treatment.**

Most people are initially nervous of having needles inserted. This because they expect the sensation from the insertion of acupuncture needles to be similar to that of receiving an injection. Before jumping to any preconceived conclusions however, it must be understood that unlike injection needles, acupuncture needles are solid, not hollow. This allows them to be very fine (quite a few acupuncture needles will fit inside the "hole" of a standard injection needle) yet strong. As a result acupuncture is usually not painful, and in fact there is often little if any sensation associated with the insertion of acupuncture needles; although this depends to some extent on the area needled; for example the hands and fingers have a greater concentration of nerve endings than the top of the head, making it more likely that a small and transient "sting" is felt on insertion of a needle in the hand than on the top of the head.

After the needles have been inserted a sensation of numbness or tingling may be felt in the area that has been needled. This sensation is usually not unpleasant. In fact, most people find an acupuncture session to be a pleasant and relaxing experience, and it is not uncommon for a patient to enter into state of deep relaxation or fall asleep during the 20 minutes to half an hour required for a treatment.

On conclusion of the treatment, after the needles have been removed, this sense of relaxation and calmness tends to persist for some time, as do any other benefits, such as any relief of pain that has been derived from the acupuncture treatment. Having said that, in many cases several treatments may be necessary before full treatment benefit is realised.



Copyright© Paul Hysen PhD. December 2010